

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----201212Z 111154 /14

R 200837Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO DECSTATE WASHDC 3981
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

S E C R E T TRIPOLI 0074

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LY, EG

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS ON EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY. EGYPTIAN AMB IN TRIPOLI VIEWS FUTURE OF RELATIONS WITH LIBYA PESSIMISTICALLY AND WITH SOME FOREBODING. EGYPT PLANS TO CONTINUE AND EVEN STEP UP PRESSURE ON QADHAFI REGIME.

2. DURING MEETING JANUARY 19 EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TUHMAI COMMENTED EXTENSIVELY ON WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS BAD AND DETERIORATING RELATIONS BETWEEN HIS COUNTRY AND LIBYA. AMBASSADOR REITERATED THAT EGYPTIAN COMPLAINTS AGAINST LIBYA INCLUDED LIBYAN SPONSORSHIP OF THE ANTI-SADAT/NASSERITE ORGANIZATION IN LIBYA AND EGYPT, LIBYAN SPONSORED SABOTAGE ACTIVITIES IN EGYPT AND THE FROZEN EGYPTIAN ACCOUNTS IN LIBYAN BANKS AMOUNTING TO SOME 17 MILLION DOGTARS. THE AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT THE

LIBYANS ARE REORGANIZING THE NASSERITE ORGANIZATION AMONG EGYPTIANS IN LIBYA AND SEEKING TO RECRUIT YOUNG EGYPTIAN STUDENTS TO EXPAND IT. NASSERITES WERE RESPONSIBLE

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FOR SABOTAGE IN EGYPT AND MIGHT BE BEHIND CURRENT RIOTING.

3. AMBASSADOR SAID HE FELT SSOMEWHAT INSECURE IN TRIPOLI THOUGH ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE HAD DECREASED. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF EGYPTIAN AND/OR SUDANESE MILITARY INTERVENTION IN LIBYA WAS STILL POSSIBLE PROVIDED THERE WAS A SUITABLE INTERNAL SITUA-

TION TO WARRANT IT. HE FELT THAT IN SUCH A CASE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY WOULD BE SUBJECT TO OPEN ATTACK. EVEN UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES THE POSSIBILITY OF A LARG INSPIRED DEMONSTRATION COULD NOT BE RULED OUT. AMBASSADOR CLAIMED HIS CYpher COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM NOW INSECURE BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE LIBYAN PENETRATION WITH SOVIET AID. ACCORDINGLY, HE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM CAIRO TO USE ONLY COURIERS.

4. TUHMAI SAW LITTLE POSSIBILITY FOR MEDIATION NOTING THAT GUINEA'S SEKOU TOURE'S ATTEMPT HAD FAILED BECAUSE LIBYANS HAD REFUSED TO AGREE TO DISCUSSION OF OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS. TITO, CURRENTLY IN TRIPOLI, WAS UNLIKELY TO TRY AGAIN THIS AREA HAVING ALREADY FAILED ONCE.

5. AMBASSADOR VIEWS QADHAFI AS FEELING INCREASINGLY INSECURE. HE TELLS VISITING DIGNITARIES THAT SADAT INTENDS TO KILL HIM. HE HAS GROWING CONCERN OVER WHAT HE SEES AS ENCIRCLEMENT BY EGYPT, SUDAN, CHAD AND POSSIBLY TUNISIA. POLICY OF THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT, ACCORDING TO TUHAMI, WILL BE TO DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE TO INCREASE THIS NERVOUSNESS. ACCORDINGLY, FORMER RCC MEMBER MUYHAYSHI IS TO BE UNLEASHED AGAIN IN THE NEAR FUTURE OVER EGYPTIAN RADIO WHICH NOW REACHES EVERY HOME IN TRIPOLI. ALSO SADAT HIMSELF WILL MAKE FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS REGARDING QADHAFI'S EVIL AND IRRATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

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6. THOUGH CHARITABLY SUGGESTING QADHAFI PERHAPS UNAWARE OF EVERYTHING BAD THAT HAPPENED IN LIBYA, TUHMAI DOUBTED POSSIBILITY OF EVER REACHING A VIABLE UNDERSTANDING WITH HIM. HE SUGGESTED US "SHOULD GET RID OF HIM." I REPLIED THAT US FOUND QADHAFI VERY DIFFICULT INDEED BUT CERTAINLY WOULD NOT RPT NOT INTERFERE IN INTERNAL LIBYAN AFFAIRS.

7. IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY AS TO WITH WHOM AMONG PRESENT LIBYAN LEADERS EGYPT MIGHT POSSIBLY WORK, AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT HIS EMBASSY HAD RECENTLY HAD VAGUE AND INDIRECT APPROACHES FROM PRIME MINISTER JALLUD WHOM THEY REGARDED AS TOUGH AND CRUDE BUT REASONABLY OPEN. AT THE SAME TIME IF SEPARATION BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN LIBYA DEVELOPED, EGYPTIANS THOUGHT THAT RCC MEMBER KHAROUBI MIGHT WELL BECOME THE LEADER OF THE EASTERN PORTION AND WAS SOMEONE WITH WHOM THEY MIGHT ALSO WORK.

8. TUHAMI SPOKE MORE THAN HE LISTENED BUT WAS
INTERESTED IN EXTENT OF US SUPPORT FOR C-130
MAINTENANCE. I EXPLAINED STATUS OF LOCKHEED TECHNICAL
GROUP AND BASICS OF US/LIBYAN POLICY. WE AGREED TO
KEEP IN TOUCH. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE DISCUSSED LIBYAN
POLICY AT LENGTH WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND FONMIN FAHMY
DURING RECENT CONSULTATIONS IN CAIRO. I LEAVE IT TO
MY COLLEAGUES IN CAIRO TO ASSESS THE AUTHORITY OF HIS
SOMEWHAT FEARSOME PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE.
CARLE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, AMBASSADORS MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TRIPOL00074
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770021-0691
Format: TEL
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770132/aaaabbnx.tel
Line Count: 126
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 511a61d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3544289
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS ON EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, LY, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/511a61d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009